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Boston University



**Boston University
School of Medicine**

News & Notes

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BUSM first to use new technology in medical school classroom; system to link BUSM, Chinese medical schools

The School of Medicine has become the first medical institution to use personal computer-based audiographic/video conferencing as a teaching tool, according to Jerome Glickman, Ed.D, director of BUSM's Educational Media Support Center. What makes the technology so unusual is that it allows users to interact on the spot, said Glickman, who also is an assistant professor of socio-medical sciences and community medicine and an assistant professor at the School of Public Health.

The computer-video-phone system enables images to be transmitted via standard telephone lines for conferencing purposes or stored in advance for classroom lectures. The system also may be used for diagnostic consultations among physicians in different locations, including the University Hospital, Boston City Hospital and other BUSM affiliates. X-rays, CT scans and electrocardiograms are some of the scans that may be transmitted.

The new system will be utilized as part of a long-distance educational program between a Chinese university and BUSM, as well as other American universities. According to Glickman, the cost to purchase the entire system is under \$7,500, thousands less than the cost of satellite and microwave transmission equipment.

Shemin performs Northeast's first human aortic-valve replacement

The first implantation of a frozen human heart valve in the Northeast successfully was performed at the University Hospital last month. Richard J. Shemin, M.D., recently appointed chairman of the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery at the School and chief of cardiothoracic surgery at UH, implanted the valve.

The technique involved sewing a cryopreserved, or frozen, human heart valve to the heart of Anthony Maloney, a 30-year-old carpenter from Dorchester, Mass., who was suffering from aortic insufficiency.

A human heart valve has the potential to last longer and present fewer complications than a bioprosthetic (pig) or a mechanical valve. There are many advantages to the human heart valve: better circulation of blood through the valve, low incidence of blood clots and excellent durability.

Shemin earned his B.A. and M.D. in 1974 as a member of the School's Six-Year Program. Before joining the BUSM faculty, he was a member of the Department of Cardiac and Thoracic Surgery at the Brigham & Women's Hospital in Boston. During



TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY—John Dittmer, Ph.D., an associate professor of histology and an assistant professor of anatomy, teaches a BUSM I histology class using pc-based audiographic/video conferencing. With a video camera hooked up to a microscope, Dittmer stored color images of histology slides on a personal computer. The image was displayed for students on a large television screen. Using an electronic pen and writing tablet, Dittmer drew circles on the image to highlight key areas. Watching attentively are, from left to right, Russell Foy, Javier Torrens, Manuel Cruz, Michele Martinez, Tamiko Long and Dana Jones. (Photo by Domenic Screnci, Educational Media, BUSM)

that time, he served as director of the Cardiac Surgical Intensive Care Unit and was a principal member of the hospital's transplantation team. He was part of the team that performed New England's first heart transplant operation in 1984.

Slone Unit study finds no link between birth defects and spermicides

A study conducted by researchers at the School of Public Health's Slone Epidemiology Unit suggests that risks for certain birth defects are not increased by exposure to spermicides.

Carol Louik, Sc.D., an assistant professor of public health (epidemiology and biostatistics), Allen Mitchell, M.D., associate director of the Unit, and Samuel Shapiro, M.B., F.R.C.P.(E), director of the Unit, examined the effect of spermicides in relation to specific congenital malformations: Down syndrome, hypospadias, limb-reduction defects, neoplasms and neural-tube defects. According to the report, recently published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the first four of these defects previously were thought to occur more often among women who had used spermicides within 600 days of delivery.

The researchers interviewed mothers of more than 1,138 infants born with the malformations concerning medical and

obstetrical histories, lifestyle habits (such as smoking and beverage consumption), and detailed histories of drug use—prescription and over-the-counter—from six months before conception through the entire pregnancy. The control group consisted of mothers of 3,442 infants with other defects.

In their report, the scientists concluded that the risks of these birth defects "are not increased by exposure to spermicide contraceptives in the first four months of pregnancy, at the time of conception or at any time before conception."

Freshman orientation features Alumni reception and dinner

Incoming BUSM students received a warm welcome from faculty members at this year's orientation program cosponsored by the Office of Student Affairs and the BUSM Alumni Association, and held on Aug. 31 and Sept. 4. Among the activities were an Alumni Association dinner and reception on the Talbot Green, a financial planning workshop and a coffee hour for students to meet faculty. Fall semester classes began Sept. 4.

Among those who addressed the students during the orientation program were William McNary Jr., Ph.D., associate dean for student affairs, John O'Connor, M.D., associate dean for admissions, and Dean John Sandson. Referring to his impending retirement, Sandson commented that this year's orientation program will be his last, and that over 40 percent of the alumni at the School have graduated during the period in which he has been dean. He told the students that recent advances in medicine make this an exciting time to be in medical school.

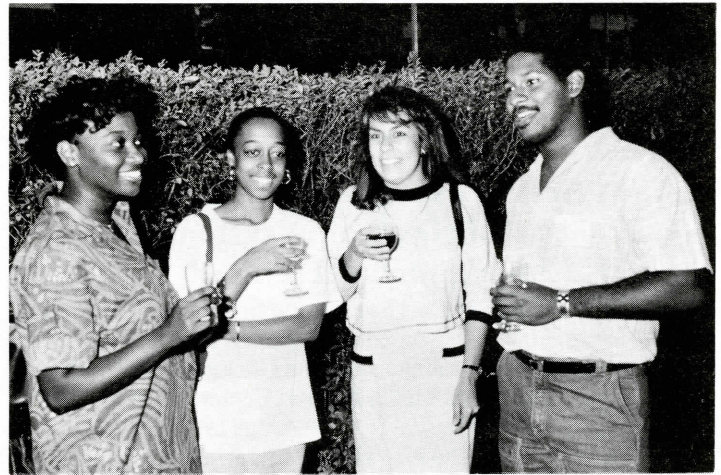
According to O'Connor, 80 men and 55 women comprise the Class of '91. The Class includes 38 Six-Year students and 14 MMEDIC students. Most of the students come from Massachusetts, New York and New Jersey, but there also are students from such countries as France, Hong Kong and Iran.

Sophisticated library systems in use at Alumni Medical Library

The Boston University Alumni Medical Library now offers access to BRS/Colleague, a computer-based literature and information service designed for the medical professional, according to Irene Christopher, chief librarian. The service allows users to conduct their own on-line searches, which will improve access to information while reducing the need for assistance, said Christopher.

The Colleague service includes the complete text of more than 80 major medical journals and books, including the *New England Journal of Medicine* and *Science*, in addition to such bibliographic sources as MEDLINE, Excerpta Medica, BIOSIS Previews, PDQ, Nursing and Allied Health Literature, Psychological Abstracts, Health Planning and Administration, International Pharmaceutical Abstracts, and many non-medical databases.

Faculty, staff and students with Boston University or University Hospital department billing numbers may sign up through



ENJOYING THE RECEPTION—Shown at the orientation dinner are BUSM I students, from left to right, Loretta Jackson, Dana Jones, Michele Martinez and Manuel Cruz. (Photo by Louis Martin)

the library for a Colleague password. The one-time registration fee is \$15 per password. This fee, along with any monthly on-line usage charges, will be billed to the department account.

In addition, the library recently has acquired a telefacsimile machine that allows the library to receive and transmit documents to other telefax locations, including overseas, in seconds. A primary use of the machine will be for rush interlibrary loans. Initially, charges will cover long-distance and paper expenses.

For further information on the library systems, please contact the Reference Department at x4228 (638-4228) or the Interlibrary Loan Section at x4270 (638-4270).

Alice Marston, Ph.D., microbiologist at the School, dies at age 85

Alice T. Marston, Ph.D., 85, who was a professor of microbiology for more than 30 years, died on August 2 in Silver Springs, Md. She also taught at the School of Nursing at Boston City Hospital.

Marston received her bachelor of science degree in 1924 from Kansas State College, and went on to earn a master's degree in 1925 and her Ph.D. in 1927 from the University of Pennsylvania. Marston first was appointed an instructor of bacteriology at BUSM and became a professor in 1933, before retiring in 1967. "She was a very loyal faculty member and we will miss her very much," said Dean John Sandson.

She was a member of the American Association of University Professors, the Society of American Bacteriologists and the Massachusetts Public Health Association. She published a medical manual on bacteriology in 1934.

Donations may be made to the Alice T. Marston Memorial Fund, BUSM Alumni Association, 80 East Concord St., Boston, MA, 02118.

Alumnus receives University award for service to the community

Nicholas J. Fiumara '39, a clinical professor of dermatology at the School, is among seven University alumni to receive the 1987 Alumni Awards. Fiumara, an internationally recognized authority in communicable and venereal diseases, will be presented with an award for "Distinguished Public Service to the Community" on Saturday, Oct. 17, during Homecoming Weekend at the Parents' Breakfast, scheduled for 9 a.m. in the George Sherman Union Ballroom. A reception will follow the awards ceremony.

Fiumara served on the staff of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for 43 years and was director of the Division of Communicable and Venereal Diseases from 1960 to 1984. He is a consultant in venereal diseases to the American Medical Association and is a councilor of the Massachusetts Medical Society.

The breakfast ceremony and reception are open to all alumni, faculty and staff. For more information, contact Jerlyn Jacobs, coordinator for the Alumni Organization, at 353-5261.

StreetFest '87 to mark opening of the UH's new Atrium Pavilion

The University Hospital will celebrate the opening of its new Atrium Pavilion with StreetFest '87 on Saturday, Oct. 17. The afternoon will feature free food from around the world and live bands, among other activities.

The Atrium Pavilion will serve as the Hospital's core clinical building and will contain two-thirds of the Hospital's beds. The official opening ceremony will be in mid-November. Among the additional clinical services in the Atrium Pavilion will be a 16-bed surgical intensive care unit, operating and recovery rooms, the Hospital's varied imaging facilities and the Pharmacy.

Health Policy Institute's Walsh awarded Kellogg Foundation Fellowship

Diana Chapman Walsh, Ph.D., associate director of the University's Health Policy Institute and a professor of public health at BUSM, has been named one of 45 outstanding American professionals by the Kellogg Foundation and one of the participants in the Foundation's National Fellowship Program.

Each Kellogg National Fellow receives a grant of \$30,000 over three years to fund his or her self-designed plan of study. The Foundation also supports a portion of each Fellow's salary (up to \$20,000). This enables the employing institution to provide release time for the Fellow to take part in Foundation activities.

Walsh is the principal investigator of two studies: One is comparing alternative treatment strategies for problem drinkers identified in the workplace; the second is a health survey of workers at manufacturing installations in the New England area.

Oscar Berman receives grant to study effects of alcoholism

Marlene Oscar Berman, Ph.D., a professor of psychiatry and neurology, has been awarded a three-year grant of approximately \$300,000 by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

The grant will be used to support her ongoing research on "Affective and Cognitive Changes in Alcoholism."

Feldman awarded five-year NIH grant to study hearing loss in the aged

Martin L. Feldman, Ph.D., an associate professor of anatomy, has been awarded a five-year grant of \$414,000 from the National Institutes of Health.

Feldman is studying the interaction of diet and the aging process in producing hearing losses in advanced age.

Gilchrest elected to dermatology society board of directors

Barbara A. Gilchrest, M.D., chairman of the Department of Dermatology, recently was elected to the board of directors of the Society for Investigative Dermatology.

The Society is the largest organization devoted to the support of research on the biology of the skin. The Society holds national and regional meetings each year and publishes the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology* each month.

Boston University leases Tow and Hold Lot for BUMC employee parking

Boston University has leased the Boston Police Tow and Hold Lot for parking for Medical Campus employees via payroll



DISCUSSING HYPERTENSION—Aram Chobanian, M.D., director of BUSM's Cardiovascular Institute, and several UH residents recently participated in a discussion on hypertension for Lifetime TV at UH. The cable channel aired the conference for a three-part series on the heart. (Photo by David Keough, Educational Media, BUSM)

deduction, according to William Gasper, assistant vice president for business affairs.

The lot, located at 636 Albany Street between Parking Lots A and C, contains more than 400 parking spaces and is expected to open Oct. 1. The fee for parking will be \$47.50 per month. Employees who are interested in parking in Lot B should contact the Office of Parking Services in room L-310 of the Instructional Building or call x4211 (638-4211).

Humphrey Center awarded seed grant for promising new projects

The School of Medicine's Hubert H. Humphrey Cancer Research Center has been awarded an institutional grant from the National Chapter of the American Cancer Society to encourage young investigators (junior faculty, post-docs) to carry out cancer-related research.

The primary purpose of the grant is to serve as "seed" money to permit initiation of promising new projects or novel ideas.

News & Notes is a publication of the Office of Publication Services. If you have news of interest to the BUSM community, please contact editor Cynthia Koury, x8482 (638-8482) or write to her at the Office of Publication Services, DOB-600 (720 Harrison Ave., Boston, MA 02118). Marge Dwyer is managing editor.

The awards will vary according to the needs of the investigator and will not exceed \$6,000. The majority of the allocations will be made to those who have not received prior grant support. The deadline for applications is Oct. 1, and application forms are available from the Cancer Research Center office, K-701, x4173 (638-4173).

Conversational Spanish course offered this fall by BUSM

The School of Medicine is offering a course in conversational Spanish for all Medical Center faculty, staff and students. Classes started on Monday, Sept. 21, in L-303 in the Instructional Building.

Beginning Spanish classes will meet on Mondays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. or Tuesdays from 12:30 to 1:00 p.m. Intermediate to advanced classes will meet on Mondays from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. or Tuesdays from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For further information, please report to one of the classes or call the Office of Student Affairs, x4166 (638-4166).

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